

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 28, 2012
7:03 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kingston called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Answering roll call were Commissioners Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Newell, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick, Chair Kingston and Student Member Nolan. Staff present: Lisa Schaefer, Human Resources Director and Staff Liaison; and Susan Howl, administrative staff. New Commission Member, Ron Erhardt, was introduced and welcomed.

III. MEETING AGENDA APPROVED

Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Seidman approving the meeting agenda of February 28, 2012.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick
Motion carried.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTED

Motion was made by Commissioner Cashmore and seconded by Commissioner Bigbee approving the consent agenda as follows:

IV.A. Approve the edited meeting minutes of January 24, 2012: Agenda Item VIII was corrected by rewriting the sentence to say that “he had attended a focus group on this issue” (aging GLBT population in Hennepin County).

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick
Motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT

There were no community comments.

VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

VI.A. HRRC OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2012

Chair of the Administration Team, Commissioner Winnick, presented the slate of candidates for HRRC Chair and opened the floor for additional nominations. There being none, the two Commissioners on the slate—Kingston and Finsness—each had the opportunity to share their hopes for HRRC and desires to serve as Chair.

As the current Vice Chair of the Commission, Member Finsness shared that it has been a grooming role for the position of Chair. However, she said that she would be willing to withdraw her name as a candidate for Chair and hopefully continue in her current role.

Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Bigbee electing Commissioner Kingston Chair of HRRC in 2012, and therefore continuing in her current role.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick
Motion carried.

Two nominations were made from the floor for the position of Vice Chair: Commissioners Finsness and Seidman. Both Commissioners were given the opportunity to speak about serving in this capacity. The Commissioners then voted by written ballot and submitted the ballots to Student Member Nolan for tabulation. The results showed five votes for Commissioner Seidman and four votes for Commission Finsness. As a result, Commissioner Seidman was elected to the position of HRRC Vice Chair for 2012.

VI.B. HRRC BYLAWS ADOPTED

Human Resources Director Schaefer reported that the City's Assistant City Manager worked with representatives from the boards and commissions to develop standardized bylaws to initialize for each advisory group. Director Schaefer explained that HRRC could adopt more specific procedures if needed as long as they did not conflict with the bylaws. The bylaws were shared with the Commission for discussion.

- Commissioner Cashmore suggested that due to poor attendance by the Student Members, student attendance requirements should be addressed.
- Commissioner Finsness recommended that the Commission be more intentional with the student members and that the Vice Chair be a mentor for them.
- Commissioner Bigbee shared that the Commission should structure student participation to become a learning experience for them and that they could occasionally chair meetings.
- Student Member Nolan indicated that she thought students would have had a greater role to play and that she would like to become more involved.
- Director Schaefer explained that attendance requirements are spelled out in the City Code and that she will talk to Assistant Manager Kurt about HRRC's concern.
- Commissioner Winnick shared that he would like to see HRRC's previous mission statement placed in the new bylaws.

Motion was made by Commissioner Newell and seconded by Commissioner Stanton to approve the newly-drafted 2012 bylaws for the Human Rights and Relations Commission.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick
Motion carried.

VI.C. RESOLUTION ENDORSED STATING OPPOSITION TO CHANGING MINNESOTA CONSTITUTION IN ORDER TO BAN THE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SAME SEX MARRIAGE

Chair Kingston shared the latest comments received from the Council Members regarding the Commission's draft resolution presented at the Council's February 6th Work Session and which was re-worked based on feedback that evening.

- Overall, the Council Members preferred the St. Paul resolution.
- Council Member Brindle offered a re-draft with edits from Council Member Bennett.
- The Commission will present a newly-drafted resolution to the City Council at its March 20th meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner Finsness and seconded by Commissioner Stanton to endorse St. Paul's resolution by changing words to fit Edina.

Motion was edited by Commissioner Newell to endorse St. Paul's resolution with Edina wording, include Member Bennett's edits and omit the words "MN United for All Families."

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick

Motion carried.

Commissioner Bigbee volunteered to prepare the resolution for the March 20th Council Meeting.

VI.D. TOM OYE AWARD NOMINATIONS AND PROCESS SHARED

Commissioner Seidman handed out packets to the Commissioners with the six names, background material and the process for the 2012 Tom Oye Human Rights Award.

- Each Commissioner will rank the nominees from first to third and submit the ballot to City Administration by March 12th.
- Results will be shared at the March Commission meeting.
- Comments/suggestions for changes to next year's process can be sent to Commissioner Winnick.

VI.E. DATES SHARED AND RSVP'S REQUESTED FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING AND THE VOLUNTEER AWARDS RECEPTION

City staff reminded the Commissioners of the two upcoming events and the need for RSVP's:

- City Council's Annual Dinner Meeting for Boards and Commissions – March 19, 5 PM, Centennial Lakes
- Volunteer Recognition Reception – April 23, 5 PM, Braemar Clubhouse – The Tom Oye Human Rights Award will be presented at this event.

VI.F. DETAILS OF STATE'S 2011 ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE SHARED

Commissioner Bigbee shared materials from the State's Annual Human Rights Conference held last December in St. Paul. Due to budget cuts, the event was on a much smaller scale. HRRC had a booth, and Commissioners Cashmore, Newell and Winnick attended with Commissioner Bigbee. Helpful information was provided by a number of presentations, providing insight for the 2012 Work Plan—i.e. groups partnering to provide citizen programs, the neighborhood engagement process and how to identify leaders in the ethnic communities.

VI.G. PROJECT FUNDING & RESOURCES REQUEST PROCESS APPROVED

Commissioners Finsness and Seidman presented the process to request project funding and resources and an accompanying request form. When requests are received for financial support, time or services, the process would be followed and the form completed. It was suggested that the materials be electronically accessible, and Commissioner Bigbee offered his assistance with the project.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cashmore and seconded by Commissioner Bigbee to approve the 2012 Project Funding and Resources Request Process and Form.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick
Motion carried.

VI.H. CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS IN EDINA DISCUSSED

Commissioner Stanton reviewed the presentations made last November by Amber Cameron of the Edina Resource Center and Daryl Coppoletti of the Hennepin South Services Collaborative at the Commission's Annual Meeting in the Council Chambers. The Commissioners discussed the need for having updated demographic information and making a decision about a process and the means to get it accomplished.

- Note the growing diverse populations in the southeast quadrant of Edina.
- Look at a greater breakdown of the population in Edina to begin data interpretation.
- How much information is needed to make decisions?

- If we need to drill down deeper, should someone be hired to take on the project? It may be too time-consuming for a sub-committee.
- The League of Women Voters of Edina undertakes various studies and could be considered a collaborative partner in an endeavor to conduct research and analysis. Students could be used to do the research.
- Other entities, such as Hennepin County, are surely out there already doing the drill down.
- HRRC should forge relationships with other groups in order to do a thorough job of drilling down. This should not involve City funding.
- Where and in what format does demographic data exist at this time?
- Because Edina is a changing community, it would be helpful to learn what people really need.
- Our “jewel” in Edina is the schools. What effect on education occurs with different and changing population? Demographic flags attached to the lower income will affect the schools.
- It will be expensive to purchase the raw data and best to gain information from manipulated data—i.e. take ethnicities and get in closer to the details.
- Additional information would be helpful to support the increasing diversity in Edina. Who can provide the information and bring understanding?
- A working group could be established consisting of representatives from HRRC, Park Board, Edina Housing Foundation, the Transportation Commission and the Police Department with the charge to get community solutions based on patterns and trends. There should be a wealth of knowledge already available in the community.
- Questions to consider: What should HRRC focus on? What should HRRC do? What does HRRC want to accomplish with the data?
- The role of HRRC is to be sure that our community members have equal rights and accessibility. HRRC should be able to identify community leaders who are being under-represented from a human rights perspective. New voices need to be represented.
- Will the Commission be able to identify community leaders by drilling down into the data?
- Because the demographics of Edina have changed, HRRC should look at ways to partner with the newer communities to get a better understanding of what is happening.
- Val Burke at Edina Community Education would be a helpful source in identifying ethnic community leaders. She will be invited to attend the next HRRC meeting.
- Low-income housing can be a source of woe for the growing diverse population.
- It would be helpful to learn what the School District is doing to prepare for the growth in ethnicities.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

No correspondence or petitions were received.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- Student Member Nolan shared that she is willing to have greater participation of the Commission. Chair Kingston will schedule a time to meet with her. Member Nolan reported that “Young Eyes” art will be on display at the Edina Art Center, representing creativity of Edina High School students.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS

There were no comments.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business on the Commission Agenda, Chair Kingston declared the meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Howl, Administrative Staff

Minutes approved by HRRC, March 27, 2012.

Jessi Kingston, HRRC Chair